Oaths

An examination of 15 lists of signatures to either the oath of allegiance or the oath of abjuration and fidelity, chosen at random from the arrivals in Philadelphia during the period, 1727-1775, shows that 75% of those required to sign could write their own names. For those who could not, English clerks would sign for them using phonetic English for the German - Aberlee for Eberli, etc. These immigrants would then put their own marks after their names as recorded. The facsimiles of the signatures reproduced in Vol. II of "Pennsylvania German Pioneers", show that there were wide variations in the kinds of marks made. The actual ones are not reproduced in the printed lists in Vol. I. There they are simply indicated by such symbols as (X), (O), (OO), (H), (L), etc.

There were at least four persons who signed in Hebrew as shown in Vol. II, "Pennsylvania German Pioneers." They were: John Abraham Glimpf, Lists 232 B&C; Isaac Levy, Lists 234 B&C; Michael Hertz, List 276 C; and Isaac Heyman, List 300 C.

It is interesting to note that in a sample consisting of the first 35 lists out of a total of about 500, the immigrants were called "Palatines or Palatyns" in 83% of the cases, "Passengers" in 8%, and "Germans", "Foreigners" or "Men" each 3%. As the years went on, the use of "Palatines" decreased. After the Revolutionary War only "German" was used.

The Palatinate (Pfalz), located in the southwestern Rhineland, was a large and important state of the "Germanys" as William Penn called the collection